

March 23, in an ambush. Another forty Marines were wounded in the fight. My heart goes out to Lance Corporal Slocum's family and friends.

Thomas Slocum was based at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina but called Thornton, Colorado, his home. He was just 22 years old at the time of his death—so young, but old enough to have developed the courage and dedication it took for him to answer the call to service. He was a brave and dedicated Marine who proudly served when his nation called on him to fight in the war against Iraq to bring freedom and justice to that country.

The death of Lance Corporal Slocum brings this war closer to home for us all. All Coloradans, and indeed all Americans share in the pain of Lance Corporal Slocum's death, but we also share in honoring his unswerving dedication to our great nation. He will forever be remembered for his heroism and his sacrifice.

APPRECIATING DR. GURMIT SINGH  
AULAKH FOR BRINGING PLIGHT  
OF SIKHS, OTHER MINORITIES  
TO INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 25, 2003*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, for 17 years, Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh has been serving the Sikhs in this country and worldwide, first as President of the International Sikh Organization, a post in which he still serves, and later as President of the Council of Khalistan, which came into being when Sikhs declared their independence from India on October 7, 1987. He has been a tireless worker for the rights of Sikhs and other minorities in India, such as Christians, Muslims, Dalits (the dark-skinned "Untouchables," the aboriginal people of South Asia), and others. Many of us in Congress have helped to expose the tyranny and terrorism that India has practiced against these groups and Dr. Aulakh has been a friend and an invaluable source of information to us.

Sikhs are a separate nation and they ruled Punjab from 1710 to 1716 and again from 1765 to 1849. They are working to reclaim their lost sovereignty. They face persecution and terror for doing so.

Dr. Aulakh's efforts and the support of those who back him have been crucial in bringing the Sikh struggle to the attention of the international community. He has worked with us in this House to the true and accurate history of the Sikh struggle and the struggles of other minorities in India. In these efforts he has been opposed by the Indian government, which has spent large amounts of money to counteract his efforts and spread disinformation. They even started a rumor on the Internet that he was dead. He has a tough job trying to achieve freedom for the Sikh Nation against the opposition of the Indian government.

Even in the U.S. Congress, the Indian government has formed the Indian Caucus, which has 139 members, to support India and deflect our attention away from the oppression and terror there. He has done a yeoman job in exposing the brutal oppression of the Indian gov-

ernment against the Sikh Nation which has killed over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984. Another 50,000 Sikhs were arrested by the police, tortured, murdered, and then declared "unidentified bodies" and secretly cremated. He has brought to the attention of Congress that even at present, 52,268 Sikh political prisoners are rotting in Indian jails as political prisoners, according to the Movement Against State Repression.

Dr. Aulakh has been tireless in promoting self-determination, which is the cornerstone of democracy. He has been a relentless advocate for the cause of Sikh freedom and the independence of their homeland, Punjab, Khalistan.

Like those of us in Congress, Dr. Aulakh knows and appreciates the privilege of service. Service is essential to the Sikh religion as it is to all religions.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to salute Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh.

STATEMENT ON KASHMIR  
VIOLENCE

**HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 25, 2003*

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my outrage at the hideous and deplorable terrorist attack in the hamlet village Nadimarg south of Srinagar, in the Indian State of Jammu-Kashmir. I am deeply shocked and saddened by the killings. As we fight against terrorism in the Middle East and Afghanistan, we have to remember that the people of India deal with terrorism every single day. I condemn this hideous crime which represents a most despicable, inhumane act of terror. My feelings and thoughts are with the victims and their families.

The attacks of the gunmen killed nearly half of the people living in the village. 24 Hindus known as Pandits lost their lives, including women and children. Most sadly, Suraj Kumar was killed only hours after celebrating his second birthday. His cousin, who was age 2 as well, was also gunned down.

The attack is an attempt to destroy the conflict resolution endeavors in the region, but violence is no path to bring peace to Kashmir. Although the identity of the gunmen is unknown at this point, it is highly likely that Islamic militants are involved in these actions as part of their efforts to expel Hindus from the valley.

In fact, this is not the first time as Islamic militants have conducted similar attacks in the past leading to an exodus of Hindus from the region. More than 300,000 Hindus have already been forced to leave Kashmir after Islamic militants commenced fighting against Indian rule in 1989. While many Hindus remain, increasing terrorist attacks have meant that they never truly feel completely secure. In fact, the Pandit families who live in Nadimarg had good relations with their Muslim neighbors, and their Muslim neighbors felt the same acute loss and pain that the Hindu community felt as well on this senseless attack.

Last year, President Musharraf pledged to President Bush that he would end Islamic militant incursions in Kashmir and that he would

terminate cross-border infiltration. Obviously, the Pakistani President has not kept his promise. Much more needs to be done to protect all communities in Jammu-Kashmir from terrorism and violence. As the snow in the Himalayas starts to melt, and travel between the mountain passes becomes easier, it is more important than ever that President Musharraf redoubles his effort to control Pakistani incursions into India.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT AND AP-  
PRECIATION FOR THE PRESI-  
DENT AND MEMBERS OF THE  
ARMED FORCES PARTICIPATING  
IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

SPEECH OF

**HON. TOM UDALL**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 20, 2003*

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, we are at war in Iraq. In the past, when our President has made the decision to commit to the use of force, the Congress has always come together to speak with one voice, for one purpose: to support the efforts of our troops, and to pray for their courage, their success, and their safe and quick return home.

While I have stated my own opposition in the past to military intervention without our allies in the United Nations, and I have heard from thousands of constituents who shared those reservations about unilateral action, I today stand solidly behind our men and women in uniform.

As the debate over whether or not to go to war with Iraq has been in the forefront in the minds of many Americans, there is one segment of our society that has been relatively overshadowed. Military families. For the past seven months, as we debated our policy in Iraq, I have heard from mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles, cousins and friends, who have been concerned about a loved one being sent overseas to fight this war. They asked me, "Congressman, when we go to war, will you and the others support our troops when they are over there?" I pledged to do exactly that, and I honor that promise today as their loved one enters the dangerous phase of the war.

More than anything, these young Americans need to know they have the backing of their fellow countrymen as they carry out their missions. As a member of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, I have heard from many that recall their service who have recalled there was no greater asset to company morale than the knowledge that their citizens in the United States stood behind them.

New Mexico has many young people that are currently involved in the Iraqi effort. Our three Air Force Bases—Cannon, Holloman, and Kirtland—have deployed over 1,000 personnel to the Middle East. These are not faceless, nameless machines. These are people that have left loved ones behind. New Mexicans are proud of these men and women, along with other Americans from all fifty states that are participating in the endeavor.

Our prayers are with them, and we look forward to their speedy success and return home. I have tremendous confidence in the men and women of our armed services to bring this conflict to a successful conclusion.